



General Assembly

February Session, 2002

Raised Bill No. 216

LCO No. 1179

Referred to Committee on Public Health

Introduced by:
(PH)

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO AUTOPSY RECORDS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 19a-411 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2002*):

3 The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner shall keep full and
4 complete records properly indexed, giving the name, if known, of
5 every person whose death is investigated, the place where the body
6 was found, the date, cause and manner of death and containing all
7 other relevant information concerning the death and a copy of the
8 death certificate. The full report and detailed findings of the autopsy
9 and toxicological and other scientific investigation, if any, shall be a
10 part of the record in each case. The office shall promptly notify the
11 state's attorney having jurisdiction of such death and deliver to him
12 copies of all pertinent records relating to every death in which further
13 investigation may be advisable. Any state's attorney, chief of police or
14 other law enforcement official may, upon request, secure copies of
15 such records or other information deemed necessary by him to the
16 performance of his official duties. The report of examinations
17 conducted by the Chief Medical Examiner, Deputy Chief Medical

18 Examiner, an associate medical examiner or an authorized assistant
 19 medical examiner, and of the autopsy and other scientific findings may
 20 be made available to the public only through the Office of the Chief
 21 Medical Examiner and in accordance with section 1-210, as amended,
 22 and the regulations of the commission. Any person may obtain copies
 23 of such records upon such conditions and payment of such fees as may
 24 be prescribed by the commission, provided no person with a legitimate
 25 interest therein, including an executor, administrator or other legal
 26 representative of the estate of the decedent, shall be denied immediate
 27 access to such records. Upon application by the Chief Medical
 28 Examiner or state's attorney to the superior court for the judicial
 29 district in which the death occurred, or to any judge of the superior
 30 court in such judicial district when said court is not then sitting, said
 31 court or such judge may limit such disclosure to the extent that there is
 32 a showing by the Chief Medical Examiner or state's attorney of
 33 compelling public interest against disclosure of any particular
 34 document or documents. Public authorities, professional, medical,
 35 legal or scientific bodies or universities or similar research bodies may,
 36 in the discretion of the commission, have access to all records upon
 37 such conditions and payment of such fees as may be prescribed by the
 38 commission. Where such information is made available for scientific or
 39 research purposes, such conditions shall include a requirement that the
 40 identity of the deceased persons shall remain confidential and shall not
 41 be published.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2002</i>

Statement of Purpose:

To ensure prompt access to autopsy reports to executors, administrators or other legal representatives of deceased persons.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]